



For immediate release
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Joint Statement from the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine and its 15 constituent Colleges on the latest development of COVID-19 outbreak

The highly transmissible Omicron variant is rampant across the world and contributes to the fifth wave of COVID-19 outbreak in Hong Kong. Although the Omicron variant appears to be causing less severe disease or lower mortality than the prior variants, it has been found to spread more easily in the community, and the exponential increase in the number of patients has overwhelmed the healthcare system of Hong Kong.

This statement jointly outlines the views of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine and its 15 constituent Colleges concerning the latest development of COVID-19 outbreak.

Citizens with positive COVID-19 test results or COVID-19 symptoms

Citizens should note the following:

1. Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department plays a unique and significant role within our healthcare system. Apart from managing patients suffering from COVID-19, its capacity for delivering timely, professional assessment and treatment for patients with other medical emergencies must be safeguarded.
2. Improper use of A&E services may jeopardise the care and prolong the waiting time of patients with genuine needs for A&E services.
3. Citizens with confirmed or preliminary positive COVID-19 testing results should follow the Government's policy and instructions regarding the use of A&E services and designated clinics.

Get vaccinated as soon as possible

Citizens are strongly advised to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible. Vaccination is highly effective in preventing serious illness and mortality. Eligible citizens are strongly encouraged to receive the third dose vaccine, as soon as possible to enhance protection against COVID-19.

Children are one of the worst affected groups in this wave. Not only should eligible children receive the vaccination as soon as possible, but also all adults should be immunized to protect the young children and babies who are not yet eligible for the vaccine.



Elderly is another high-risk group vulnerable to severe diseases and death from COVID-19 infection. Elderlies should therefore get COVID-19 vaccination without delay.

Pregnant and lactating women are also strongly recommended to receive the vaccine for better protection of themselves and their babies.

Stay vigilant in maintaining infection control measures

The following measures are crucial for combating the community transmission of COVID-19 whether or not an individual has already been vaccinated:

- Maintain social distancing
- Minimise social gatherings and avoid multi-household gatherings
- Minimise trips outside home or visiting crowded places
- Allow employees to work from home as far as possible
- Wear a well-fitted mask and practise good hand hygiene
- Avoid talking without mask while having meals. Put masks on immediately after meals
- Avoid handshake or physical contact

Citizens should seek medical advice and get tested immediately if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

COVID-19 has become a common threat to humankind. We plead with citizens to continue fighting the pandemic by exercising social responsibility, taking precautionary measures and maintain vigilance. We appeal to the public, especially elderlies who have not yet been vaccinated, to take prompt action to receive their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and the second and booster dose on time.

Together we fight the virus!